

Fresno City Council District 1

July 2007

An Open Letter: To The residents of District 1...



Blong Xiong
Acting Council President
Fresno City Council District 1

I would like to take this opportunity to thank District 1's residents for entrusting me with the role of Councilmember for the

City of Fresno.

Not only are we diverse in our community makeup, but diverse in our geography as well. We have the Historic Tower District, Fresno High School, Fresno City Community College area, to our northern area of Shaw Avenue and Marks, where Lion's Park is located, to the expanding growth area west of Highway 99 in the Central Unified School District. District 1 residents continue to be progressive and active residents, which I believe is the strength of our District.

It has been a tremendous and productive first six months. In that time, my colleagues and I have addressed some long standing issues that are critical to the City's future. Some of these issues include Development Street Impact Fees and

adjustments of Utility Rate Fees.

I am committed to keeping my constituency informed and updated on the activities and initiatives my colleagues and I are undertaking with your tax investment. Therefore, I have initiated this newsletter that will be produced and distributed seasonally to District 1 residents.

I want to be a good steward for our District and am looking forward to meeting with many of you during my term in office. Again, thank you for entrusting me with my new role as councilmember for District 1.

Sincerely,

Blong Xiong
Acting City Council President

Capitol Improvement Projects

During this year's budget, I worked closely with the Mayor and my council colleagues to ensure they understand the needs of our district.

This dialog resulted in several priorities receiving funding. For this year, a top priority is improving the State

Route 99 and Ashlan Avenue intersection. As many of you know, the intersection requires expansion to elevate the traffic congestion and improve motorist safety.

As a result, Mayor Autry and I developed a plan to fully fund the lane expansion project in the next two budget

cycles. This year's FY-08-09 budget includes \$450,000 with additional funding expected to be added from the Redevelopment Agency. My goal is to have the project completed within the next

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see Ashlan Expansion

Tower Beautification Sees New Growth

One of the most unique areas in the City and District 1 is the Tower District.

We are excited about the progress we've already made in the Tower District and the possibilities for future projects in this wonderful historic area.

From the first day I took office, I have been involved with the street tree project taking place along Olive Avenue. Twenty-two new trees were planted and the tree wells were upgraded with historically accurate, and beautiful, cast iron grates.

Initially, this was made possible thanks to Mayor Autry, The District 1 team was suffi-

ciently impressed with the quality of the project, that we made room in the next city budget to upgrade an additional 20 tree wells.

Thanks in part to a matching grant from the Fresno Arts Council, the neon on the theater spire and ball were completely restored to glowing beauty. I was honored to be present for the re-lighting of the 50-foot Tower Theatre spire held on May 10th.

The Tower District is seeing a surge in new businesses and improvement projects and we are committed to do our part to see this wonderful part of our city continue to thrive.

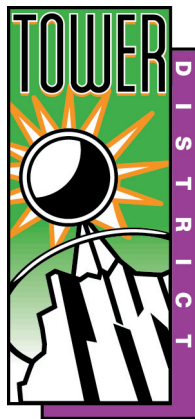


Our office is working closely with the Tower residents and business owners on future plans!

Residents Appointed New Committee Members

This year I had the pleasure of appointing several District 1 residents to serve on the District 1 Implementation Committee and Tower District Review Committee. These two committees are critical to ensuring that public input is provided at the front end of building and community development.

The District 1 Implementation Committee will review and make recommendations on all re-zoning applica-



tions within the District. Additionally, the Tower District Review Committee is charged with approving all re-zone applications and building permits in our historic Tower District.

I am grateful that my district has so many constituents willing to volunteer their valuable time to serve in these capacities. Please join me in recognizing and thanking our new committee members.

Implementation Committee

Blong Lee
Deborah Walters
Jackie Ryle
Jeff Barrett
Jim Quan
John McCubbin
Mark Rivera
Scott Miller

Tower Committee

Chris Johnson
Kiel Famellos-Schmidt

Small Farmer Freeze Relief Program



This year's freeze devastated local farmers and small businesses in the City of Fresno and caused significant damage to crops, as

well as loss of revenue.

In an effort to provide immediate assistance to our small businesses and farmers Councilmember Jerry Duncan, Mayor Alan Autry, and I partnered with Bank of America, Wells Fargo Bank, CitiBank and Fresno County EOC to establish a relief loan program.

Together, we were able to provide more than \$500,000 in no interest loans for the replanting of their crops and, salvaging injured small businesses so they continue contributing to our economy.

I want to thank all our private



banking partners for their donations which covered all the administrative cost allowing us to maximize our public funds.

Serving the Public Trust

Improving Our Air

I believe the City of Fresno has a responsibility and obligation to take a lead role in cleaning our air now.

For this reason, I joined State Senator Dean Florez in lobbying city council colleagues from our surrounding cities to appoint Henry T. Perea to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, the governing body responsible for cleaning our air.

In addition, I lobbied for my colleagues to appoint councilmember Raji Brar from the City of Arvin, which is unfortunately ranked the City with the dirtiest air in the United States. I am confident these two new appointments will provide fresh perspectives and leadership in meeting our goal of obtaining cleaner air.

Volunteer Commission

This year I accepted an appointment by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger to the California Volunteers Commission. Serving as Honorary Chairperson is California First Lady Maria Shriver.

California Volunteers administers programs such as AmeriCorps, Citizen Corps, and the Cesar Chavez Day of Service and Learning. The commission also guides policy development to support non-profit and service fields. They have responsibility for the coordination of CaliforniaVolunteers.org, a statewide network matching Californians to volunteer opportunities.

As the only commissioner from the Central Valley I will work to ensure the commission understands our needs and helps us expand opportunities here at home.

Rail Consolidation

I have been appointed by my city council colleagues to serve on the Fresno County Council of Government's Rail Consolidation Committee.

This appointment will give me an opportunity to assist in moving the much needed consolidation of our rail lines forward. It will result in a reduction of air and noise pollution while also improving the safety of our community.





District 1 Here to Meet Your Needs...

The staff of District 1 is here to serve its residents in all areas of interest to the community. Whether it is helping residents deal with infrastructure needs, code enforcement, or legislations, District 1 is here to assist. We welcome visitors and look forward to having comments about our neighborhoods. It is through community bonds, we are able to provide higher quality service for all residents of our city.

City Council Member

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Most City of Fresno services can be answered by the new call center. Reachable at (559) 621-CITY.

Requests for District Infrastructure and special cases can be directed to District 1 Staff at (559) 621-8000.

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two years. I will keep you updated as developments occur.

District 1 will soon be home to the Central Valley's first Universally Accessible Regional Park. The park is under construction on a 15-acre parcel on the corner of Gettysburg and Polk.

This new neighborhood park will include baseball fields, basketball courts, restrooms/concession building, children's play area, water play area, picnic pavilions, on-site parking, landscaping, and security lighting.

I am also proud to announce that Lions and Quigley Parks will be undergoing some much needed renovations this year. The planned improvements include, new roofs, windows, resurfacing basketball courts, and improving grassing areas.

